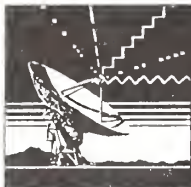


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# Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2743

December 8, 1995

**FIRST MUTUAL AGREEMENT BY USDA AND NC CONSERVATION SIGNED --** The U.S. Department of Agriculture entered into a new, modernized relationship with conservation districts (December 4) as Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman signed the first mutual agreement with the Guilford Soil and Water Conservation District and the Governor of North Carolina. The mutual agreement replaces the memorandums of understanding which have existed between the Secretary of Agriculture and each of the nation's 3,000 soil conservation districts since the 1930s. The new mutual agreements modernize the 60-year-old process, allowing for changes in technology. They better reflect the expanding conservation partnership and the changing scope and requirements of the conservation program. In addition, relationships involving Indian tribes have become an integral part of the partnership. **Contact: Diana Morse (202) 720-4772.**

**USDA STREAMLINING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE --** Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman announced (November 30) that the plan for reorganizing and streamlining the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) already has resulted in staff year savings of more than \$900 million with progress ahead of schedule. USDA's streamlining plan calls for an overall reduction of 13,000 staff years, dropping from a level of 114,000 in FY1993 to 101,000 staff years by end of FY1999. USDA's staff year usage at the end of FY1995 was 104,000, resulting in a savings of about \$900 million over the past two years. Staff reductions are projected to yield a total savings of more than \$2.8 billion by the end of FY1999 in staff year costs alone. USDA plans to complete its field restructuring by moving or closing offices in nearly 700 more locations by end of 1997, resulting in 2,536 one-stop service centers across the country. **Contact: Laura Trivers (202) 720-4623.**

**U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS FORECAST AT \$58 BILLION --** Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman (November 30) announced U.S. agricultural exports for fiscal year 1996 are expected to reach a record \$58 billion, up nearly \$4 billion (more than 7 percent) from fiscal 1995. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "U. S. agricultural exports generate more than \$100 billion annually in business activity throughout the U.S. economy and provide jobs for nearly a million workers in all 50 States." Tight global supplies are expected to substantially raise prices for wheat, coarse grains, and soybeans, boosting export value even though volume is likely to be down somewhat from 1995. The 1996 forecast total of U.S. agricultural exports is up \$3.5 billion from the August projection. U.S. agricultural imports are forecast at \$29 billion for 1996, down slightly from the previous year. **Contact Joel Greene (202) 219-0816.**

**CCC INTEREST RATE FOR DECEMBER --** Commodity loans disbursed in December by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) will carry a 5-1/2 percent interest rate, according to Grant Buntrock, Executive Vice President of the CCC. The 5-1/2 percent rate is down from November's 5-5/8 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

**\$2.95 MILLION IN EZ/EC AID FOR TWO COUNTIES --** USDA Under Secretary Jill Long Thompson signed (November 30) a Memorandum of Agreement that finalizes Northampton and Accomack counties as an Enterprise Community. The signing makes available nearly \$3 million in Social Service Block Grant funds through the Department of Health and Human Services. Under Secretary Thompson said, "This represents a major step toward the revitalization of this community." Northampton and Accomack counties were designated an Enterprise Community in December 1994, along with 29 other rural Enterprise Communities and three rural Empowerment Zones. The designated community sits on Virginia's eastern shore along the Chesapeake Bay. Despite the historic homes and expensive newer homes that overlook tidal creeks and the Bay, Northampton and Accomack are two of the poorest counties in Virginia. Almost 13,000 people live within 240 square miles with a per capita income of \$12,500. The counties lack sufficient housing, water and sewer systems and a trained workforce. **Contact: Eileen McMahon (202) 720-1255.**

**USDA RELEASES SPECIAL UPLAND COTTON QUOTA # 14 --** High cotton prices have triggered another special import quota that will permit the importation of a quantity of upland cotton equal to one week's domestic mill use, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced (November 30). The special import quota that will permit the importation of 43,657,604 kilograms (96,248,619 pounds) of upland cotton is being established on Dec. 6. The quota applies to upland cotton purchased not later than Mar. 4, 1996, and entered into the U.S. not later than June 2, 1996. The special import quota identifies a quantity of imports that is not subject to the over-quota tariff rate of a tariff-rate quota. Future quotas, in addition to the quantity announced, will be established if price conditions warrant. **Contact: Janise Zygmunt (202) 720-8841.**

**PROPOSED RULE FOR SHEEP AND WOOL ORDER RELEASED --** The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued a proposed rule for a national Sheep and Wool Promotion, Research, Education and Information Order. The order outlines a program designed to strengthen the position of sheep and sheep products in the marketplace. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS), administrator Lon Hatamiya said, "The order will only become effective if producers, feeders and importers approve it in an upcoming nationwide referendum." No date has been set for the referendum since final referendum rules have not been published. If approved, the program will be funded by a mandatory assessment on domestic sheep producers, sheep feeders, and importers of sheep and sheep products. If the proposed order is approved in referendum, USDA will announce the date when assessment collections will begin. The program will be administered by the 120-member National Sheep Promotion, Research and Information Board, comprised of 85 producers, 10 feeders, and 25 importers. **Contact: Becky Unkenholz (202) 720-8998.**

**FAX AND INTERNET --** You can obtain our radio and TV programming information and the **Broadcasters Letter** through your facsimile machine by calling USDA's AgNewsFax or by accessing USDA's Home Page. **FAX:** Use the phone connected to your machine to call **(202) 690-3944**. At voice prompts, press **1**, press **4**, then to receive **Broadcasters Letter**, press **9200**; radio newslines information, press **9250**; TV contents billboard, press **9260**; TV scripts, press **9270**. After all your selections, then press **#**, press **3**, and press the **start** button on your FAX machine. **INTERNET:** Address for this letter is <http://www.USDA.GOV//news/news.htm>.

**EDITED BY LESLIE PARKER**



## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA # 2010--** Let's go Christmas tree "chopping!" Gary Crawford visits a large and elaborate Christmas tree farm that offers consumers much more than just a tree. **(Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).**

**CONSUMER TIME # 1489 --** Christmas tree "chopping." The care and feeding of your Christmas tree. "Real" Christmas trees holding on. A "living" Christmas tree. Homes for migrant workers. **(Weekly cassette -- consumer features).**

**AGRITAPE # 2002 --** Exports: Good holiday tidings. No changes in EEP programs right now. U.S. rice position getting stronger in the world. USDA streamlining on schedule and European hormone ban update. **(Weekly cassette -- news features).**

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE:** Tuesday, December 12, crop/weather update, U.S. crop production and world supply/demand estimates. Wednesday, December 13, feed outlook, soybean outlook, rice outlook, wheat outlook, dairy outlook, world crop/grain situation, and world cotton outlook. Friday, December 15, cattle on Feed and milk production. Monday, December 18, tobacco outlook. Tuesday, December 19, crop/weather outlook and sugar outlook. Wednesday, December 20, agricultural outlook. Thursday, December 21, income/finance outlook. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

**USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

**COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545**

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

**FEATURES --** Restoring and enhancing wetlands through USDA's Wetland Reserve Programs are featured with a focus on central Iowa projects. USDA's reorganization is ahead of schedule with its goal of saving money and improving services for farmers and other customers. Both features were voiced by Patrick O'Leary.

**ACTUALITIES --** Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman talks about USDA reorganization and farm bill issues. USDA Assistant Secretary Wardell Townsend discusses the ongoing streamlining of USDA, including field office consolidations. Remarks include overview and specific impacts for Kansas City, MO, New Orleans, LA, and Fort Collins, CO locations.

**UPCOMING FEATURES --** Lynn Wyvill reports on USDA's Urban Resources Partnership program at work in a community garden in Seattle. Patrick O'Leary reports on a polymer, developed by ARS scientists in Idaho, that reduces soil erosion when added to furrow irrigation water.

**SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:** Thursdays at 3:45-4:00 p.m. ET on Telstar 303, Transponder 5H(horizontal), Channel 10, Downlink Frequency 3900 MHZ, Audio, 6.2/6.8. **Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072, or write to: Room 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300. Internet E-mail: LQUINN@USDA.GOV.**

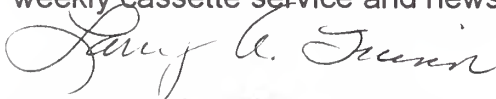
## OFF MIKE

**DAIRY MYSTERY**...could use Sherlock Holmes' help. **Lori Struve** (WCUB, Manitowoc, WI) reports that dairy farmers Brian and Beth Hurd have mysteriously lost 129 cows from their 300-cow herd since last February. At the worst, 67 cows died in one week. Cows don't want to eat, drink or go into the milking parlor. Lori has interviewed the family and shared part of their story with other broadcasters in hopes of finding those who may have solved such a mystery. She wonders if stray voltage from a barn transformer could be contributing. If you have clues that may help solve this mystery, call Lori at (414) 683-6800.

**CORPORATE HOG FARMING**...and Farm Bill concerns are key issues on the minds of Iowa listeners, reports **Steve Fuerst** (KKRF, Stuart, IA & KGRA, Jefferson, IA). Steve recently replaced **Kathleen Erickson** doing farm news at both stations. Steve's been in broadcasting for 11 years. His phone number is (515) 523-1107.

**GREATER PEORIA FARM SHOW**...drew more than 25,000 participants last week, reports **Colleen Callahan** (WMBD, Peoria, IL). The three-day event is the largest indoor farm show in Illinois and has a waiting list for exhibitors. Colleen broadcast live news reports from there all three days. In addition to farm equipment, there were exhibits on global positioning, all aspects of agricultural production and seminars on Internet's World Wide Web taught by University of Illinois. Colleen says an estimated 11 percent of farmers are capable of accessing information through Internet. (Perhaps some will see this letter on USDA's Home Page.)

**FLORIDA NETWORK**...extends its coverage, reports **Gary Cooper** (Southeast Agnet Radio Network, Kenansville, FL). **Everett Griner** is helping Gary provide crop features and commentary for listeners in Georgia, Alabama and north Florida. We're happy to add Everett to our list of weekly cassette service and newsletter lists.



**LARRY A. QUINN, Director**  
Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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